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FOOD COMBINING SIMPLIFIED

"How To Get The Most From Your Food"

by Dennis Nelson

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DEDICATION

To Dr. Herbert M. Shelton, whose writings led me out of the confusion surrounding health matters and into a new reality of body awareness, pervaded by the "light of truth" of natural laws, this booklet is affectionately and gratefully dedicated by the author.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Well, this is my first booklet and it's been a rewarding experience. Hopefully, this will be the first of a series of booklets, all promoting the concept of "health by healthful living." I would like to give thanks to the following people who helped me in this endeavor: To Arthur Andrews and T. C. Fry for their time in proofreading the manuscript and for their valuable suggestions both in readability and scientific technicalities; to Herman Banks, Clinton & Elvira Nelson, Clayton & Helen Olson, David Stry, and Jo Willard for their special assistance; to Dr. Herbert Shelton for his uncompromising book on the subject; and to my compatriot, Clay Olson, whose desire to make "food combining" a household phrase inspired me to write this booklet.

GLOSSARY

biological—that which pertains to life and its processes; that which most favors life.

enzyme—a protein that acts as a catalyst in the digestion of foods.

fermentation—decomposition (as opposed to digestion) of sugar and starch (carbohydrates), and their conversion by microorganisms (bacteria) to carbon dioxide, alcohol, acetic acid, and lactic acid.

gastric—pertaining to the stomach.

hygiene—the science that deals with health. (See "natural hygiene.")

hygienist—meaning natural hygienist, one who practices *natural* hygiene.

insalivation—the process by which saliva is secreted to help moisten food and to initiate digestion.

mastication—the act of chewing and grinding in the mouth, to reduce food to a pulpy mass.

natural hygiene—a nontherapeutic system of healthful living, based on natural laws, and supported by anatomy, biology, and physiology.

nutrition—the sum total of all the processes which interact to supply our nutritive needs.

pH factor—a measure of acidity, neutrality, or alkalinity of a liquid or a solid.

putrefaction—decomposition of proteins and their conversion by microorganisms to poisonous substances.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.. 4
Classification of Foods.............................. 6
The Rationale of Food Combining..................... 8
Digestion of Foods.................................. 12
Incompatible Combinations........................... 17
Our Frugivorous Heritage............................ 22
Meal Planning....................................... 26
Closing Thoughts.................................... 29

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the term "food combining" has become a popular phrase among the patrons of natural food stores. Now available are many charts showing how one should combine his/her food for easier and more efficient digestion. These charts come in various sizes from that which will fit in a wallet to the larger variety to adorn the kitchen wall or refrigerator door. And you might have seen our* very own postcard format to encourage you to send a chart to a friend.

However, I venture to guess that the vast majority of those people who own one of these charts do not practice food combining on a regular basis. Why? Simply because they do not understand the rationale that supports food combining principles. I'm fully aware that old habits of eating can be difficult to overcome, but the ability to create new "habits" is greatly enhanced by the mind's acceptance of new knowledge.

That is the reason this booklet has been written—to make this information readily available by presenting a format that is both simple and inexpensive. However, this booklet is not intended to replace the original work on the subject, *Food Combining Made Easy,* by Dr. Herbert Shelton, first published in 1951 and still in print (revised edition published 1982). His book is the "bible" on the subject and should be read by anyone who desires more thorough information.

If you are unfamiliar with the principles of food combining, I ask that you give this healthful practice your thoughtful consideration. It's been ten years since I first became familiar with the principles of food combining through Dr. Shelton's aforementioned book. Through the experience of myself and others, the principles of food combining have been found to be valid, and represent an important practice in securing optimal nutrition. But don't take my word for it. Find out for yourself through your own study and experience.

*Published by The Plan.

CLASSIFICATION OF FOODS

For the purposes of this booklet, we may conveniently categorize a food according to its composition. Although I do not recommend the use of flesh foods or dairy products as part of a healthful diet, they are included for the benefit of those who continue to eat them. Their digestibility will be enhanced by the application of food combining principles. Likewise, garlic and onions should only be used occasionally, if at all, as they are irritants to the digestive tract. Also, the syrups/sugars are not recommended but are included for clarity.

PROTEINS

nuts
seeds
peanuts
lentils
lentil sprouts
sunflower sprouts
milk
cheese
eggs
flesh foods

FATS

avocados
coconuts
vegetable oils
butter
cream
margarine
lard

STARCHES

potatoes
yams
chestnuts
Jerusalem artichokes
pumpkins
globe artichokes
winter squash
carrots
beets
parsnips
mature, starchy corn
dry beans
dry peas
lima beans
cereals & grains
sprouted grains

SYRUPS/SUGARS

white sugar
brown sugar
raw sugar
honey
cane syrup
maple syrup

LOW & NONSTARCHY VEGETABLES

- celery
- fresh, sweet corn
- fresh, sweet peas
- Brussels sprouts
- Chinese cabbage
- broccoli
- Swiss chard
- escarole
- sweet pepper
- summer squash
- parsley
- eggplant
- alfalfa sprouts
- mushrooms
- green beans
- onion
- lettuce
- spinach
- cucumber
- cauliflower
- cabbage
- collards
- bok choy
- kohlrabi
- turnips
- endive
- radish
- sorrel
- kale
- okra
- asparagus
- garlic

MELONS

- watermelon
- honeydew
- muskmelon
- cantaloupe
- casaba
- crenshaw
- Christmas melon
- Persian melon
- Canary melon

ACID FRUITS

- orange
- grapefruit
- kumquat
- lemon
- lime
- pineapple
- strawberry
- kiwi
- tomato

SUB-ACID FRUITS

- mango
- cherry
- apple
- peach
- plum
- lychee
- berries
- grapes
- papaya
- apricot
- pear
- nectarine
- loquat
- cherimoya
- mulberry

SWEET FRUITS

- banana
- date
- persimmon
- sapote
- fresh fig
- grapes (Thompsom & Muscat)
- all dried fruits

THE RATIONALE OF FOOD COMBINING

The principles of food combining were first explained in the earlier part of this century by Dr. John Tilden, M.D., author of *Toxemia Explained,* and Dr. William Howard Hay, M.D. Their work was followed by that of Dr. Herbert Shelton and has continued to the present by those doctors and teachers of the "Natural Hygiene" movement.

This is not to imply that those people "laid down the law" about how we should eat, but rather that they observed how the human body works most efficiently in carrying out the processes of digestion. They found that nature's way demands simplicity and our desire to alter this plan will be met with less than ideal consequences.

It has been observed that animals in nature eat very simply and combine their food minimally. Carnivorous animals eat their meat alone, without any carbohydrate or acid foods. Birds and squirrels have also been observed to eat one type of food at a meal. Certainly no animal in a state of nature has before it at any one time the variety of foods that many humans are accustomed to eating at a conventional meal.

The basis for food combining is a logical application of the chemistry and physiology of digestion, with special consideration given to the limitations of our digestive juices and enzymes. The practical application of this knowledge has given us the rules of food combining, which we may use to insure a greater degree of digestive efficiency.

In relating this concept to nutrition, we should realize that the nourishment our body recieves is determined by that food which we digest and assimilate. That which is not digested only wastes the body's energy in passing it through the alimentary canal. Worse than this, the undigested food becomes soil for bacteria to feed upon, resulting in putrefaction and fermentation which irritate and poison our tissues. This is a primary contributing factor in the causation of disease.

This is not to say that applying the principles of food combining will insure good digestion, as there are other factors which reduce our digestive capabilities. Such acts as overeating, eating under stressful conditions, eating when fatigued, eating just before or after strenuous exercise, eating when feverish or when there is severe inflammation, eating during strong emotional experiences—all of these conditions hinder digestion and dispose to bacterial decomposition of the food. In addition, the use of condiments (especially salt), vinegar, alcohol, coffee or tea during a meal retards digestion considerably. All of these circumstances must be considered if one desires good digestion, and consequently a well-nourished body.

That people suffer greatly from indigestion is evidenced by the fact that billions of dollars are spent yearly on over-the-counter medicines in the U.S. alone, to suppress the pains and discomforts due to conventional eating and living habits. Diseases of the stomach, intestines, colon, and rectum are on the increase; their conventional treatment with drugs and surgery does not remove their underlying causes. We need to adopt a sane plan of living, that includes sound nutritional principles, if we are ever to remedy this situation. Simple meals of compatible combinations are a necessity for good digestion.

As Dr. Shelton says in his book, "As all physiologists are agreed that the character of the digestive juice secreted corresponds with the character of the food to be digested and that each food calls for its own specific modification of the digestive juice, it follows as the night the day, that complex mixtures of food greatly impair the efficiency of digestion. Simple meals will prove to be more easily digested, hence more healthful."

The wonderful thing about the food combining concept is that anyone, no matter what their dietary preference, may benefit by the application of these rules to their particular diet. Whether you subsist on a vegetarian diet or one that includes animal foods, need not be a concern in relationship to food combining principles. The digestive system works fundamentally the same for all humans, both chemically and physiologically. The idea that each one of us has individual needs and capacities is true to a certain extent, but this does not nullify the physiological limitations of the human organism.

In the words of Dr. Shelton again: "There are great numbers of people who will object to these simple rules on the ground that their own experiences have revealed that it is safe for them to violate each and every one of these rules. The rules, they will say, may be applicable to some people, but not to them. The individual, rejecting the existence of a general law as the basis of physiology and digestion, in diet, in health and disease, and holding that what is most valuable to one person may not be helpful to another—that 'one man's meat is another man's poison'—and that what is best for each individual may be determined only by observation of the *idiosyncrasies* of each, will, perhaps, find it impossible to accept the truth of any plan of living that does not meet with the approval of his/her habits and prejudices.

"If we accept the obvious fact that a general law underlies physiology and biology and that all mankind are subject to this law, it becomes easy to understand that hard and fast rules may be established that will fit all human beings. Physiology is not as chaotic and unlawful as some people seem to think.

"I frequently get another objection to any effort to regulate the diet and eating practices according to any law of life. It runs this way: 'Diet is not all of life. Other things are also important.' Nobody stresses this fact as much or as soundly as does the Hygienist; but the objection is not raised by those who wish to emphasize the importance of the other factors of life. It is made by those who desire to find a reason to disregard all the sane rules of eating and of living."

DIGESTION OF FOODS

Digestion is the term that applies to the processes by which the complex materials of food are broken down into simpler substances in preparation for their subsequent entrance into the bloodstream. For example, proteins are broken down into amino acids; carbohydrates, composed of starches and sugars, are converted into simple sugars; and fats are broken down into fatty acids. These are the simple substances which the body can use to build new tissue. Let us now discuss this process and how it works efficiently.

The human digestive tract may be divided into three cavities—the mouth, the stomach, and the small intestine. Each of these cavities contains its own distinct digestive secretions with which to carry on its own specific work of digestion. In each of these three stages, the work carried on at one stage prepares the food for the digestive work done at the next stage.

For purposes of this booklet concerning the practicality of food combining, we need only concern ourselves with the first two stages of the digestive process, that of salivary and gastric digestion. However, it must be understood that the efficiency of their work will determine the efficiency of digestion that is subsequently conducted in the intestine.

When food enters the mouth, the mechanical process of mastication along with the chemical process of insalivation initiate the digestive process. The taste buds are excited and these tiny nerve endings send signals to the brain to determine the type of food ingested. Immediately, specific juices are secreted, and an environment is created for the efficient digestion of that particular food. If this food contains starch, then a specific enzyme called *salivary amylase* (ptyalin) will also be secreted in the saliva. However, this enzyme acts only upon starches and will not be secreted if the food does not contain starch.

After leaving the mouth, the food passes down the esophagus and into the stomach where the digestive process continues. Here we find gastric juice containing primarily hydrochloric acid and digestive enzymes. The pH of this gastric juice is variable, ranging from a highly-acidic medium to a mildly-acid or nearly-neutral medium, depending on the type of food eaten. This variable range is secured by the degree of concentration of the hydrochloric acid.

Also present in the gastric juice are three primary enzymes: *pepsin,* which acts upon proteins; *gastric lipase,* which acts upon fats; and *rennin,* which acts upon milk proteins. (This third enzyme is present in sufficient quantities only in the gastric juice of infants. When the child has a full set of teeth, the secretion of rennin begins to diminish. This phenomenon indicates the time for weaning and feeding solid food. There is no physiological need for milk from this time forth.)

The important fact to understand here is that each enzyme can act only upon one class of food. For instance, the enzyme *salivary amylase* which acts upon starches, cannot act upon protein or fat. In fact, enzymatic action is so specific that each one of the different forms of complex sugars, such as maltose or lactose, requires its own specific enzyme for its digestion.

An additional consideration is the fluid medium in which the digestive process takes place during the gastric phase. In the case of starches, *salivary amylase* requires an alkaline medium in which to continue its work and will be destroyed by a highly-acid environment. This is also true of fats, whereby the enzyme *gastric lipase* and its action upon fats is inhibited by a highly-acid medium in the stomach. However, in the case of proteins we have an opposite situation. They require a highly-acid environment for the enzymatic activity of *pepsin* to take place. This is created by a sufficient outpouring of hydrochloric acid into the gastric juice.

Now as previously stated, there are three stages of the digestive process. Each one of these stages requires the action of different enzymes, and the efficiency of their work is determined by the digestive efficiency of the preceding stage. It is sequential operation. For example, if *pepsin,* the enzyme secreted in the stomach during protein digestion, has not converted these proteins into *peptones,* then *erepsin,* the enzyme secreted in the intestine, will not be able to carry on the final stage of protein digestion, that of converting the *peptones* into amino acids. The work of each enzyme is designed *specifically* for that stage at which it is secreted.

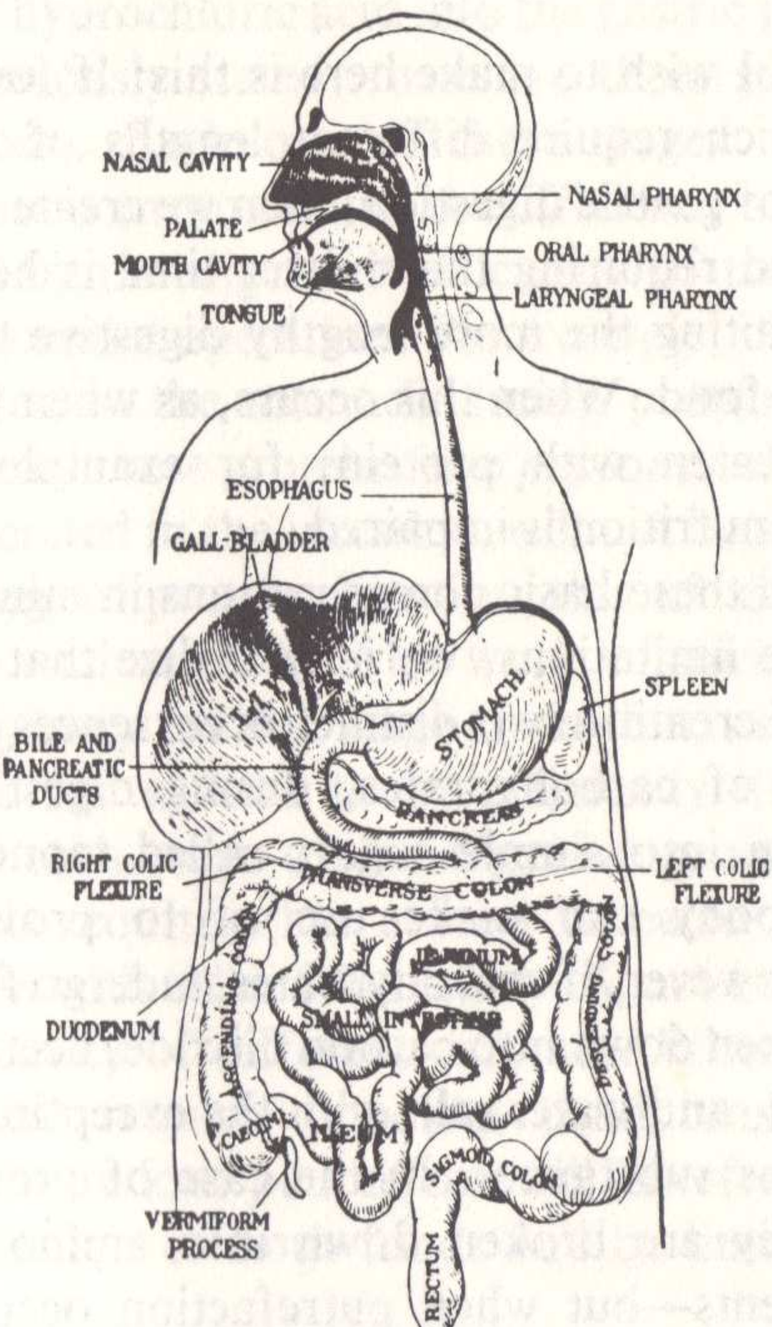
So in order for a food to be efficiently digested, the limitations of each stage of the digestive process must be respected. This requires that a food be eaten by itself or in combination with other foods that will not interfere with the distinct activity of different enzymes. When two foods are eaten that require opposite conditions for their digestion, the secretions poured out will interfere with each other and digestion of both foods will be limited or even suspended.

Another observation concerning the efficient digestion of various foods pertains to the emptying time of the stomach into the intestine. In the case of fruits, when they are eaten alone as a meal, they will remain in the stomach from ten minutes to an hour. However, when concentrated starches are eaten, their digestive time in the stomach takes from two to three hours. In the case of concentrated proteins, the digestive time required in the stomach is about four hours. In fact, some foods may require five or six hours to complete gastric digestion, as in the case of legumes or grains.

The point I wish to make here is this: If foods are eaten together which require different lengths of time for the completion of gastric digestion, then we create a situation in which a food requiring the shorter time is held up in the stomach awaiting the more lengthy digestive time required by the other food. When this occurs, as when fruit or other sugars are eaten with protein, for example, the sugars ferment and nutrition is impaired.

So with all these basic considerations in mind concerning our digestive limitations, we may realize that we have the possiblity of creating two distinct occurrences when eating: In the case of carbohydrates, during digestion they are broken down into simple sugars called monosaccharides, which the body can make use of to provide us with nutrients. However, if carbohydrates undergo fermentation, they are broken down into carbon dioxide, acetic acid, lactic acid, alcohol, and water, all, with the exception of the last, are poisonous substances. In the case of proteins, during digestion they are broken down into amino acids—once again, nutrients—but when putrefaction occurs, they are broken down into a variety of ptomaines and leucomaines and other poisons.

This is true with all other food components: *Enzymatic digestion of foods prepares them for the nutritive needs of the body, whereas bacterial decomposition of foods makes them unfit to meet body needs, poisoning the body with the products of fermentation and/or putrefaction.* The responsibility for harmonious digestion rests with us. Failure to observe digestive requirements results in mild to acute indigestion and subsequent pathology.



INCOMPATIBLE COMBINATIONS

All foods are composed of various nutritive materials and yet the human body is capable of digesting these for its needs. These natural "combinations" sometimes occasion the argument that food combining principles are invalid—"Nature does not observe these principles!" However, as Dr. Tilden pointed out, nature did not invent the sandwich, humans did.

Although the digestive juices may acceptably digest one food that is a protein/starch combination such as rice, they cannot easily and efficiently digest two foods of opposite character, such as nuts and potatoes, eaten at the same meal. In fact, those foods which contain a high quantity of both protein and starch, such as dry beans, are difficult for humans to digest. (Beans in their fresh state as found in the pod contain less starch and are more easily digested.)

Nature presents us with relatively simple "combinations" and we have the capacity to efficiently digest these. A mixture of two or more foods at a meal creates a more complex situation. With this in mind, let us consider those food combinations that are inharmonious with our digestive capabilities.

Acid/Starch Combination

This is a poor combination because *salivary amylase,* the enzyme secreted in the saliva to digest starch, is destroyed by acids, bringing starch digestion to an end. This means that with a meal of concentrated starch, such as potatoes or grains, you would not include tomatoes or lemon juice in the accompanying salad. (Vinegar should not be used in any salad.) Additionally, fruits should not be eaten with starches, as the fruit acids will greatly impair starch digestion and the fruit will be held up in the stomach awaiting upon the digestion of the starch. This leads to fermentation of the fruit sugars.

Protein/Starch Combination

This is a poor combination because protein requires a highly-acid environment, created by a great outpouring of hydrochloric acid into the stomach. Starch requires an alkaline environment for the continuation of the digestive work done by the enzyme, salivary amylase, and this enzyme is destroyed by hydrochloric acid. Examples of such combinations are both obvious and numerous and may be a reason why food combining has never been given very much attention, as it negates many of our typical conventional meals.

Protein/Protein Combination

Each type of protein food requires different timing and different modifications of the digestive secretions, making the efficient digestion of two different types of protein at a meal very difficult, such as eggs and milk, or nuts and cheese. As protein is already a more difficult food factor to digest than other food factors, we will do best by consuming only one type of protein at a meal. This does not exclude the eating of two or more types of nuts or seeds at a meal.

(Note: It has been ascertained that it is unnecessary to consume all the essential amino acids at each meal to insure adequate protein needs.)

Acid/Protein Combination

This is a poor combination because the acids, like those found in fruits and tomatoes, inhibit the outpouring of gastric juice and may even destroy the enzyme pepsin, necessary for protein digestion. Additionally, the fruits are held up in the stomach awaiting the completion of protein digestion. This results in fermentation of the fruit sugars.

However, proteins such as nuts, seeds and cheese constitute exceptions to this rule. Due to their high fat content, they do not decompose as rapidly as other proteins. The inhibiting factor of fat on gastric digestion of protein causes these types of proteins to receive their strongest digestive juice during the latter part of digestion. The fruit acids do not interfere with the flow of gastric juice any more than the fat of nuts, seeds, or cheese. This distinction makes it acceptable to eat acid fruits with these proteins.

Fat/Protein Combination

As was mentioned in the preceding paragraph, fat inhibits the flow of gastric juice, thereby interfering with the gastric digestion of protein. It should be noted in this context that our need for fat is small and that most protein foods already contain a sufficient quantity of fat, making any additional intake contraindicated. This means that butter, oils, avocado, etc., should not be used with nuts, eggs, flesh foods, etc.

Sugar/Protein Combination

Sugars have an inhibiting effect upon the secretion of gastric juice, interfering with protein digestion. This is true of both fruit sugars and commercial sugars. In addition to this, we create a situation in which the sugars are held up in the stomach awaiting the completion of gastric digestion of protein. When sugars are eaten alone, they quickly leave the stomach. However, when eaten with protein, their longer duration in this region inevitably leads to their fermentation.

Sugar/Starch Combination

This presents a similar situation as the one just stated. If starches are eaten with sugars (once again, this includes both fruit sugars and commercial sugars), the salivary secretion will not contain salivary amylase to digest the starch. The sugars are delayed in the stomach and the mixture of both the starch and sugar leads to bacterial fermentation. One can easily surmise the results of pastry eating, or the common breakfast of eating fruits with cereal.

Take Milk Alone

For those of you who have not "weaned" yourself from this animal food, please note that due to its protein and fat content, it combines poorly with all foods. Upon entering the stomach it forms curds which tend to form around the particles of other foods in the stomach. This insulating effect prevents the digestion of the other foods until after the milk curd is digested. Acid fruits constitute a fair combination with this food, but it is best to take it alone, and it is inadvisable to use it at all. (This rule also applies to soured milk, such as clabber or yogurt.)

OUR FRUGIVOROUS HERITAGE

The fruit and vegetable diet is one to which we are biologically adapted. Our anatomy and physiology show that we are neither carnivorous (those animals which prey and feed on other animals) nor herbivorous (those animals which feed on grasses and leaves) but rather frugivorous, meaning those animals which subsist largely on fruits. Nature provides us with the structural equipment and faculties for procuring these foods and it is to our advantage to follow her dictate. With the addition of small amounts of nuts and seeds, and green vegetables, we have a diet that provides more than adequately all human nutritive needs that can be derived from food.*

Fruits supply us with a full and adequate range of nutrients in the most easily assimilated form. Their carbohydrates are in the form of simple sugars, their proteins are in the form of amino acids and their fats are in the form of fatty acids. These nutrients are all ready for absorption, rather than requiring the energy expenditure of the digestive process, as other foods do.

This fact that fruits do not require enzymatic digestion is the reason why some people experience digestive problems after eating them. However, it must be emphasized that the problems are not due to the fruit itself, but rather to the incompatible mixture created when fruit is eaten with other foods. When this is done, the fruit is delayed in the stomach awaiting the completion of gastric digestion of the other foods, instead of passing through to the small intestine. The warm environment provided in the stomach lends itself to bacterial fermentation of the fruit sugars and considerable discomfort may ensue. Taking fruit with cereal, as in the conventional breakfast, and taking fruit as a dessert constitute examples of wrongly-combined fruit eating.

Fruit should be eaten as a meal by itself. Eaten in this manner, it will be absorbed efficiently and will be appreciated for nourishment and sensory appeal, this latter attribute being unequaled by any other food. My own experience of eating mono-fruit meals (meaning one type of fruit at a meal), has provided me with my most enjoyable fruit feasts. However, this is not necessary. A meal of a few types of fruit is acceptable, although there are some food combining principles one would be wise to observe when eating a mixed fruit meal.

Fruits may be conveniently divided into three classes—acid, sub-acid, and sweet. Although there is no clear line of demarcation between these classes of fruits, we may safely distinguish between those of the acid category and those of the sweet category and avoid this combination, as the acids will inhibit the digestion of the sweet fruits. The class of sub-acid fruits may be combined with either the acid fruits or the sweet fruits, depending on whether the fruit is closer to the acid side, such as a plum, or closer to the sweet side, such as an apricot. However, this combination constitutes only a fair mixture. Combinations of fruits that are within the same classification would make a better choice for the fruit meal. Additionally, it is best to keep the meal simple, as is true for all meals, and limit the types of fruits eaten at a meal to two or three.

Melons comprise a special category of fruits in reference to food combining. Since these fruits decompose very quickly, even faster than other fruits, they should be eaten as a melon meal, unmixed with other fruits. Eaten in this manner, they are quickly passed from the stomach and into the intestine. The gastric distress that some people notice due to eating melons as a dessert may be alleviated by observing the rule to *eat melons alone*.

An unusual fruit, the avocado, presents an unique situation as it contains a high quantity of fat (oil). Ideally, it should be combined with nonstarchy vegetables. However, due to its low protein content, the avocado makes a fair combination with starches, such as potatoes, providing us with a healthier alternative to butter or margarine.

Including avocados as part of a fruit meal is best done only with acid fruits. The inhibiting effect of fat upon the absorption of fruit sugars will tend to bacterial fermentation of the sugars, so it is best to avoid combining the avocado with fruits of the sub-acid and sweet classes. Also, avocados should not be combined with proteins as fat inhibits protein digestion.

Although it is best not to eat fruits with vegetables, celery and lettuce provide us with two exceptions to this rule. In fact, in some cases of impaired digestion, it has been found that the addition of either of these vegetables actually enhances the digestion of the fruit meal.

The tomato, which is generally regarded as a vegetable, although botanically a fruit, is best combined with nonstarchy vegetables. They should not be combined with either a protein or a starch as the acids in the tomato will interfere with the digestion of both. The exception once again is provided by those proteins containing a high fat content, i.e. nuts, seed, avocado, and cheese.

Mention should be made here in reference to the practice of drinking fruit juices between meals, as it is responsible for a great deal of digestive problems. If one desires these, they should be taken freshly squeezed and as a meal by themselves, sipped slowly. Taken in this manner, they will not interfere with the digestion of the previous meal.

One final thought regarding the fruit meal is that it provides us with a natural alternative to "fast foods." In addition to being the simplest food to prepare and serve, it also provides us with an excellent source of carbohydrates (especially the sweeter varieties) to supply the energy needs of the body. Fruits make the ideal breakfast for both children and adults and their ease of digestibility will allow more of the body's energy to be directed towards the day's work and play. So keep the above rules in mind and enjoy your frugivorous heritage.

*For further information regarding comparative anatomy and physiology and how it relates to the natural human dietary, please read *Fit Food For Humanity* by Arthur Andrews—available for $1.50 postpaid from: Dennis Nelson, Box 2302, Santa Cruz, CA 95063.

MEAL PLANNING

So now you understand the principles of food combining and you want to apply these rules to your daily meals. For those of you who have been oriented towards simple meals, this may be an easy change, as these rules are relatively easy to remember and apply in your meal creations. However, for some of you the application of these rules may be a drastic alteration. So this chapter will help guide you in the proper selection of compatible food menus.

But first, we will discuss how often one should eat a meal. The first and most important criteria should be whether hunger is felt. True hunger is a mouth and throat sensation, like thirst, and occasions no unpleasantness. (It is not that "gnawing" sensation felt in the stomach). When any unpleasant symptoms are felt, it is advisable to skip the meal.

Eating two or three meals a day is sufficient and will allow enough time in-between meals (at least four hours), for the digestive system to accomplish its necessary work for each meal. The idea of eating "one meal all day long" will not allow the food to be thoroughly digested. Consequently digestion and assimilation are impaired. The habit of "snacking" between meals also contributes to digestive complications and distress.

Drinking with meals is another point of consideration. It has been shown that this practice dilutes the digestive juices and retards digestion. So you are probably wondering about how you should deal with this. The answer is simple: Avoid the use of salt and other condiments, and adopt a diet predominating in uncooked foods. Your need for water will greatly diminish.

If thirst does arise, keep the following rules in mind to help insure better digestion: 1. drink only when thirsty; 2. drink only pure water—distilled water is the purest—(rain water is distilled by nature but it is contaminated by pollutants); 3. water may be taken ten to twenty minutes before a meal, or one-half hour after a fruit meal, two hours after a starch meal, and four hours after a protein meal.

Now let's talk about the meals themselves: breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Breakfast need not be taken immediately upon arising but rather when hunger occurs. Sometimes this is a number of hours into the morning. Whenever hunger happens, the fruit meal, whole and unsweetened, will serve us best, due to its ease of digestion.

Lunch may vary from either another fruit meal or if you prefer a vegetable salad. The addition of a starch to the salad would make an excellent choice, if you would like a concentrated food at this time. (Remember, do not use tomatoes in the salad if you decide to include the starch item.)

Dinner, the last meal of the day, would be the best time to have your "heavier" protein food, as this class of food requires more energy for digestion. This item should also be accompanied by a large vegetable salad. (Once again, avoid tomatoes in the salad, unless the protein item is either nuts, seeds, avocado or cheese.)

Keep in mind that a variety of foods at a meal tends toward overeating, as each food stimulates the appetite with its own unique taste sensations. As Dr. Shelton says, "Variety is the spice of gluttony." Once again, simple meals will help you realize when your hunger has been satisfied.

The following example menus are only suggestions—I encourage you to use your own imagination in creating compatible food menus.

SAMPLE MENUS

Breakfast	*Lunch*	*Dinner*
oranges & grapefruit	vegetable salad & carrots, potatoes	vegetable salad & green beans, nuts
apples & pears	vegetable salad & brown rice	vegetable salad & fresh corn, avocado
watermelon	nectarines & peaches	vegetable salad & broccoli, lentil sprouts
bananas & dates	vegetable salad & cauliflower, yams	vegetable salad & cucumbers, sunflower seeds
honeydew melon	apricots & figs	vegetable salad & tomatoes, avocado
cherries & plums	vegetable salad & tomatoes	vegetable salad & sweet peppers, nuts
pineapple & strawberries	vegetable salad	vegetable salad & baked beans

Note: Salads should be simply prepared, with a minimum amount of cutting done. Cutting furthers oxidation of the food and subsequently decreases its nutritive value. The best way to eat your vegetables is to just wash them and eat them whole.

CLOSING THOUGHTS

It has been estimated that the amount of energy expended in digesting three meals requires the equivalent of eight hours of working energy. Lessening the burden of digestion by eating simple meals of compatible combinations will enable us to realize more energy for other activities, in addition to improved assimilation of our food.

However, don't make food combining a worry or a bother to yourself and others, especially at mealtime. Your meals should be an enjoyable experience. A serene atmosphere, both outside yourself and within, is of primary importance to good digestion. Adopt these principles at your own pace, continually striving for improvement. Health is the objective—simplicity is the key.

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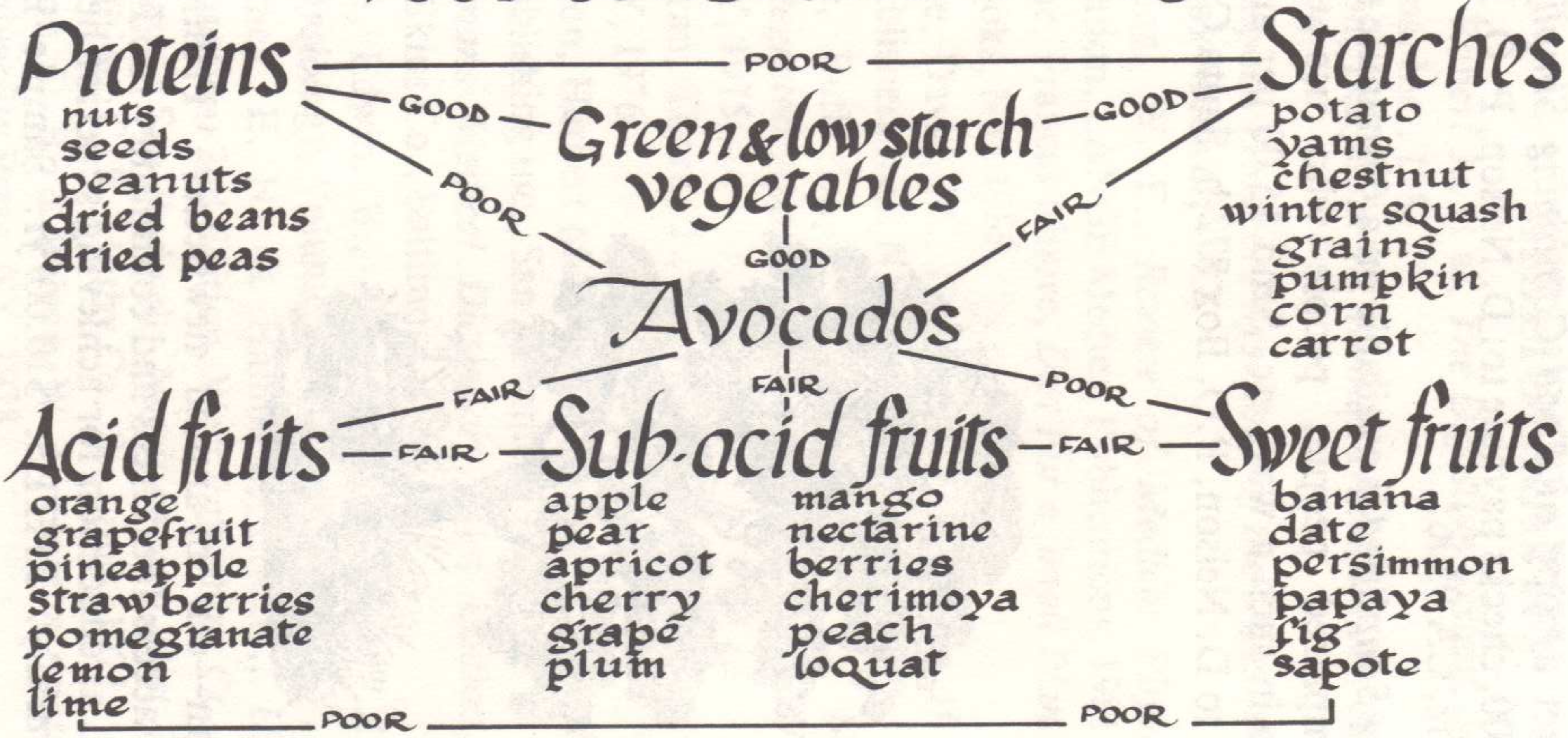
If you cannot get a copy of *Food Combining Simplified* locally, send $2.00, checks payable to: D. Nelson, P. O. Box 872-b, Santa Cruz, CA 95061.

Food Combining Simplified is available on a 60-minute tape for visually impaired people, people who use their commuting time in such a way, etc. Send $5.00 per audio cassette payable to D. Nelson, P.O. Box 872-b, Santa Cruz, CA 95061.

About The Plan—our bi-annual newsletter "Fruition" promotes public access food trees and community food-tree nurseries; as well as education for achieving superior health simply and naturally. RATES: $10.00/yr. Sample issue $2.00.

FOOD COMBINING CHART



Eat but one concentrated protein food at a meal.
Tomatoes may be combined with non-starchy vegetables & nuts or avocados.
Fruits should be eaten as a fruit meal, unmixed with other foods except lettuce &/or celery.
Melons should be eaten alone. This chart was prepared from various sources.
We suggest reading "Food Combining Simplified" by Dennis Nelson.

- ✓ improves digestion
- ✓ conserves the body's energy
- ✓ increases nutrient availability
- ✓ maintains normal blood alkalinity
- ✓ simplifies meal planning
- ✓ decreases acid-forming toxins
- ✓ helps to eliminate constipation, gas, and diarrhea